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TM

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

WHEN A
COBRA COMES
A'CALLING...



JR-JR/AM

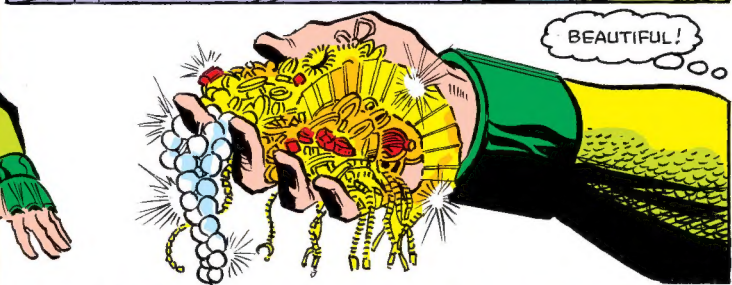
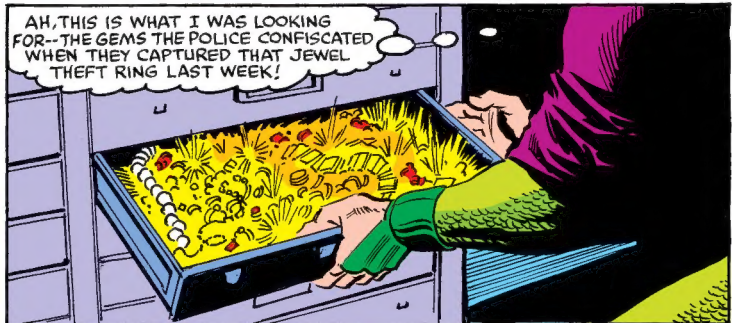
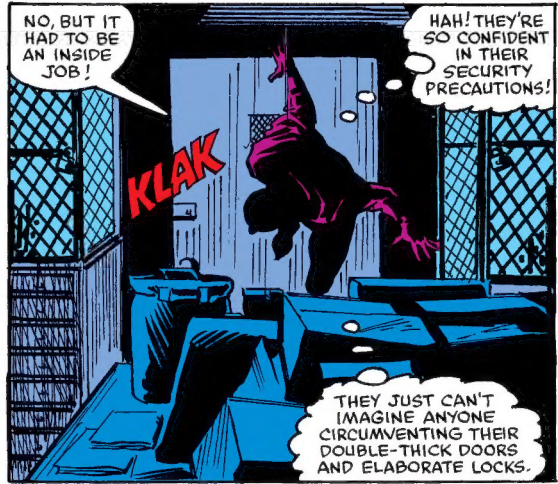
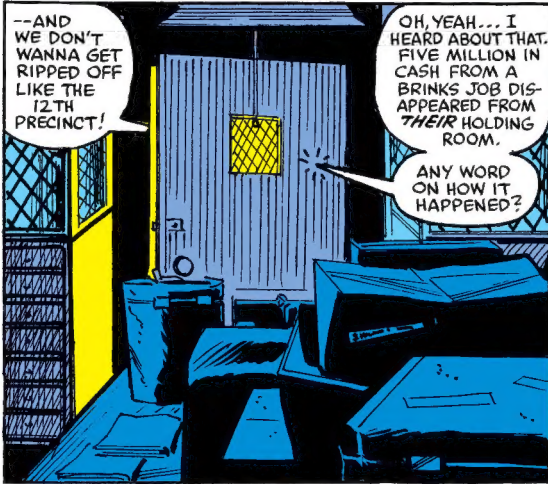
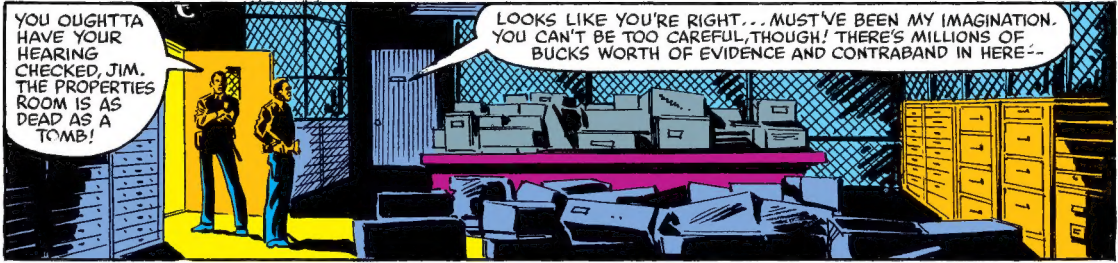
STAN LEE
PRESENTS

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN



CAUGHT IN THE ACT...

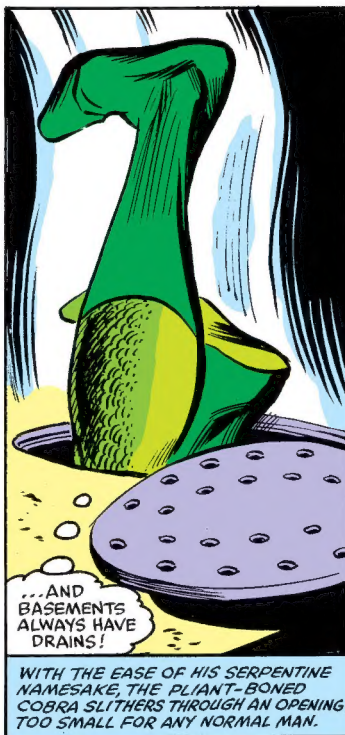
by ROGER STERN • JOHN ROMITA JR. & JIM MOONEY • JOE ROSEN • BOB SHAREN • TOM DeFALCO • JIM SHOOTER
SCRIPTER ARTISTS LETTERER COLORIST EDITOR PRECINCT CAPTAIN





AFTER ALL,
I CAN ALWAYS
COME BACK
FOR MORE!

HOW AMUSING!
THIS IS THE MOST
WELL-GUARDED ROOM
IN THE ENTIRE
PRECINCT HOUSE...
BUT IT'S IN THE
BASEMENT...



...AND
BASEMENTS
ALWAYS HAVE
DRAINS!

WITH THE EASE OF HIS SERPENTINE
NAMESAKE, THE PLANT-BONED
COBRA SLITHERS THROUGH AN OPENING
TOO SMALL FOR ANY NORMAL MAN.

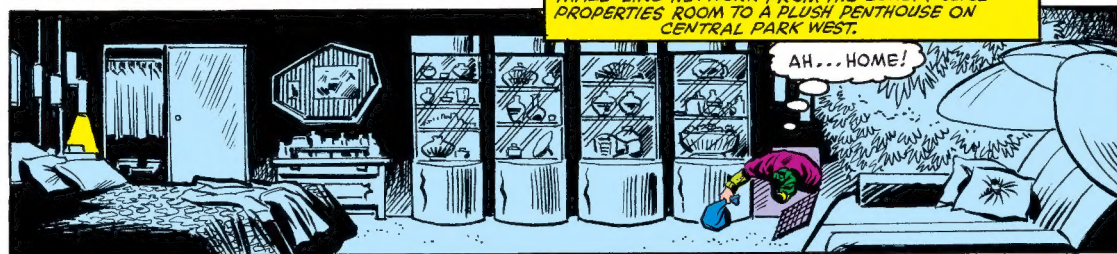


ONCE I REPLACE THE
DRAIN COVER, NOT A
CLUE WILL REMAIN OF
MY ENTRY... SAVE FOR
THE BURNING
LIGHT.

THAT SHOULD GIVE THOSE TWO COPS
SOMETHING TO WONDER ABOUT! HAH-HA!

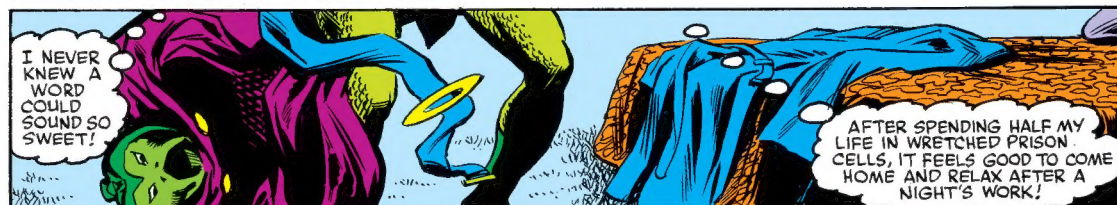


BENEATH THE CITY STREETS, NEW YORK IS A LABY-
RINTH OF UNTOLD MILES OF PIPES AND CONDUITS.



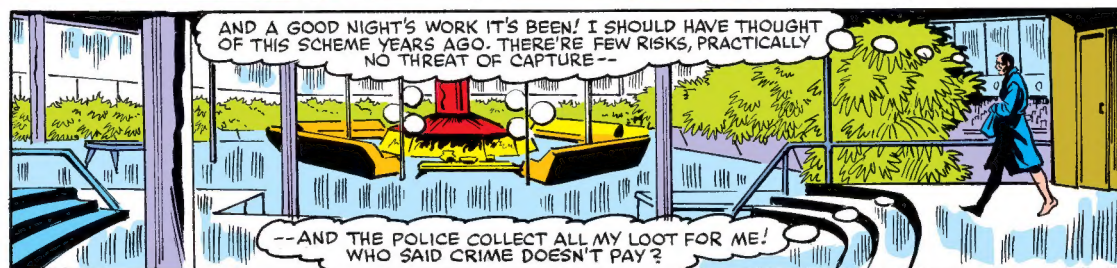
FOR THE COBRA, IT IS CHILD'S PLAY TO TRAVEL THAT
MAZE-LIKE NETWORK FROM THE LOWLY POLICE
PROPERTIES ROOM TO A PLUSH PENTHOUSE ON
CENTRAL PARK WEST.

AH... HOME!



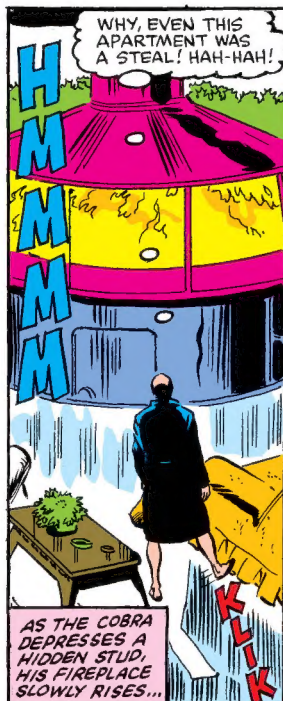
I NEVER
KNEW A
WORD
COULD
SOUND SO
SWEET!

AFTER SPENDING HALF MY
LIFE IN WRETCHED PRISON
CELLS, IT FEELS GOOD TO COME
HOME AND RELAX AFTER A
NIGHT'S WORK!



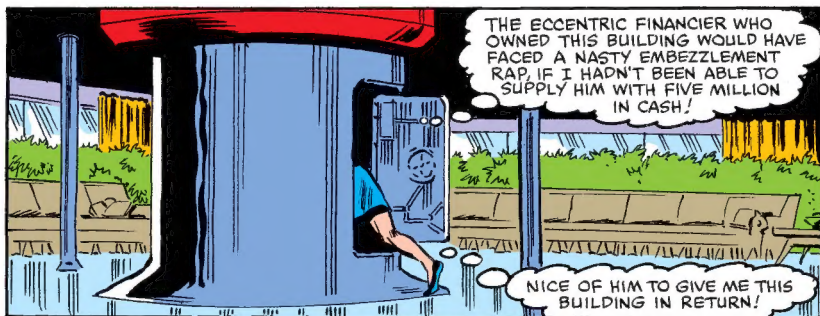
AND A GOOD NIGHT'S WORK IT'S BEEN! I SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT
OF THIS SCHEME YEARS AGO. THERE'RE FEW RISKS, PRACTICALLY
NO THREAT OF CAPTURE--

--AND THE POLICE COLLECT ALL MY LOOT FOR ME!
WHO SAID CRIME DOESN'T PAY?



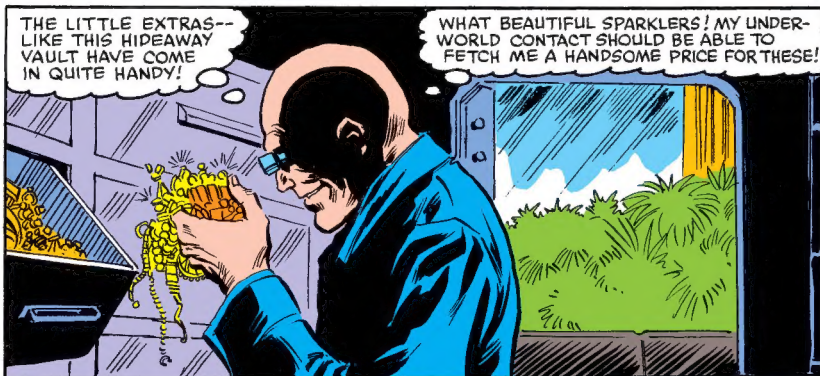
WHY, EVEN THIS APARTMENT WAS A STEAL! HAH-HAH!

AS THE COBRA DEPRESSES A HIDDEN STUD, HIS FIREPLACE SLOWLY RISES...



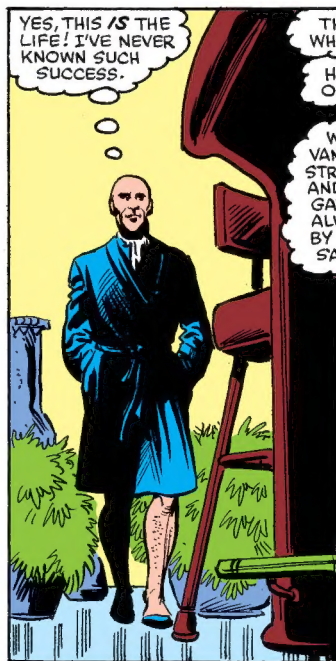
THE ECCENTRIC FINANCIER WHO OWNED THIS BUILDING WOULD HAVE FACED A NASTY EMBEZZLEMENT RAP, IF I HADN'T BEEN ABLE TO SUPPLY HIM WITH FIVE MILLION IN CASH!

NICE OF HIM TO GIVE ME THIS BUILDING IN RETURN!



THE LITTLE EXTRAS-- LIKE THIS HIDEAWAY VAULT HAVE COME IN QUITE HANDY!

WHAT BEAUTIFUL SPARKLERS! MY UNDERWORLD CONTACT SHOULD BE ABLE TO FETCH ME A HANDSOME PRICE FOR THESE!

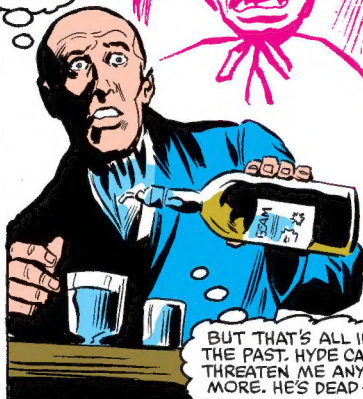


YES, THIS IS THE LIFE! I'VE NEVER KNOWN SUCH SUCCESS.

THINGS WERE CERTAINLY NEVER THIS GOOD WHEN I WAS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MR. HYDE!

HYDE! JUST THE THOUGHT OF THAT MADMAN GIVES ME CHILLS!

WHATEVER ADVANTAGE HIS MONSTROUS STRENGTH AND CUNNING GAVE US WAS ALWAYS LOST BY HIS BESTIAL SAVAGERY!

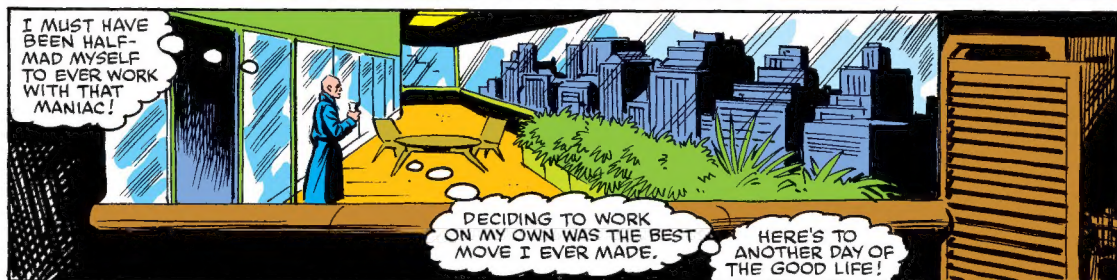


BUT THAT'S ALL IN THE PAST. HYDE CAN'T THREATEN ME ANYMORE. HE'S DEAD--



"-- ACCIDENTALLY FLASH-FROZEN AND DROWNED IN THE HARBOR, WHEN HIS ATTEMPT TO DESTROY THE CITY WAS FOILED BY CAPTAIN AMERICA!*"

*SEE CAP #252.



I MUST HAVE BEEN HALF-MAD MYSELF TO EVER WORK WITH THAT MANIAC!

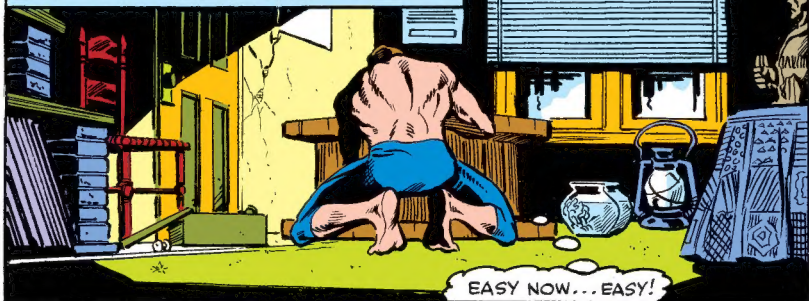
DECIDING TO WORK ON MY OWN WAS THE BEST MOVE I EVER MADE.

HERE'S TO ANOTHER DAY OF THE GOOD LIFE!

MEANWHILE, SOME FIFTY BLOCKS TO THE SOUTH, IN A MODEST CHELSEA APARTMENT BUILDING...



...GRAD STUDENT PETER PARKER-- LIVER OF THE NOT-SO-GOOD LIFE-- GIVES HIS UNDIVIDED ATTENTION TO A VERY IMPORTANT PROJECT!



EASY NOW... EASY!

THIS HAS TO FIT JUST SO, OR THE WHOLE THING'S BLOWN!

C'MON, PARKER-- LET'S SEE A LITTLE OF THAT FABLED SPIDER-DEXTERITY! YOU CAN DO IT! JUST ONE MORE AND...

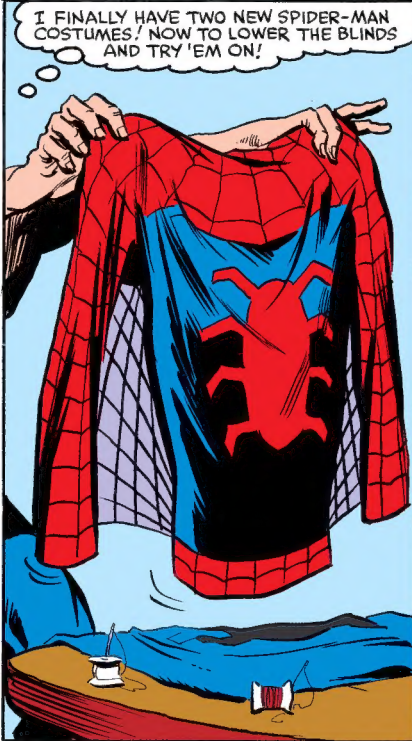


...DONE!

WOW, I THOUGHT I'D NEVER FINISH! IT TOOK ME HALF THE NIGHT, BUT IT WAS WORTH IT!



I FINALLY HAVE TWO NEW SPIDER-MAN COSTUMES! NOW TO LOWER THE BLINDS AND TRY 'EM ON!

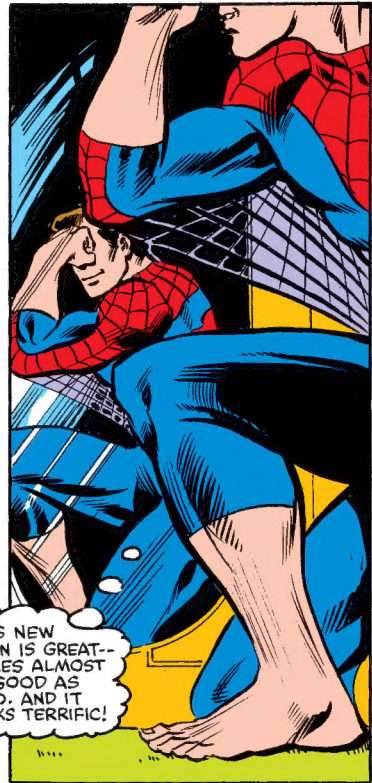
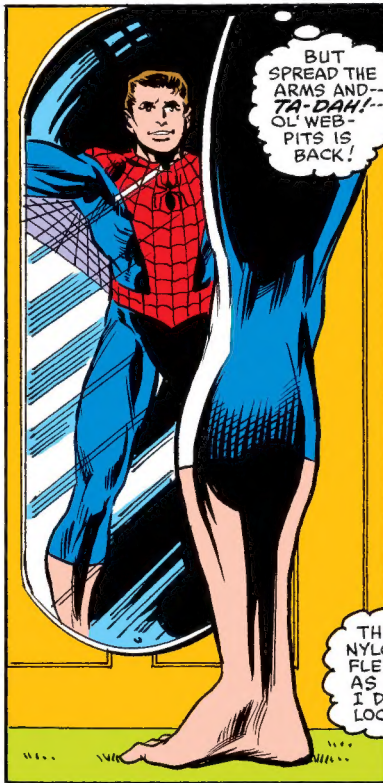
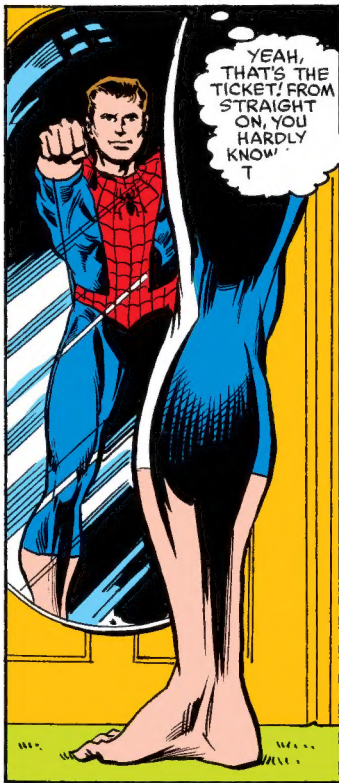
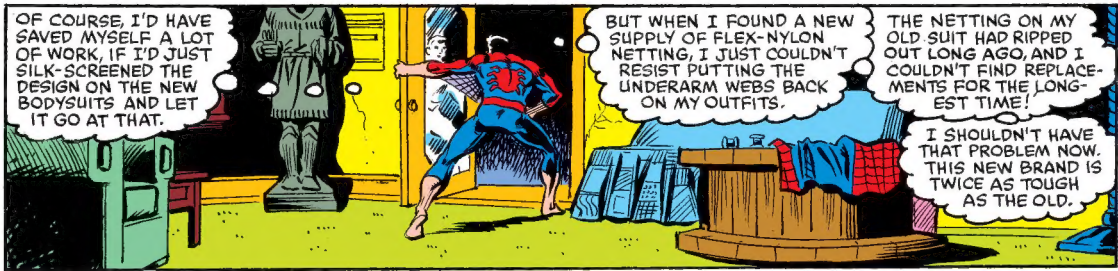


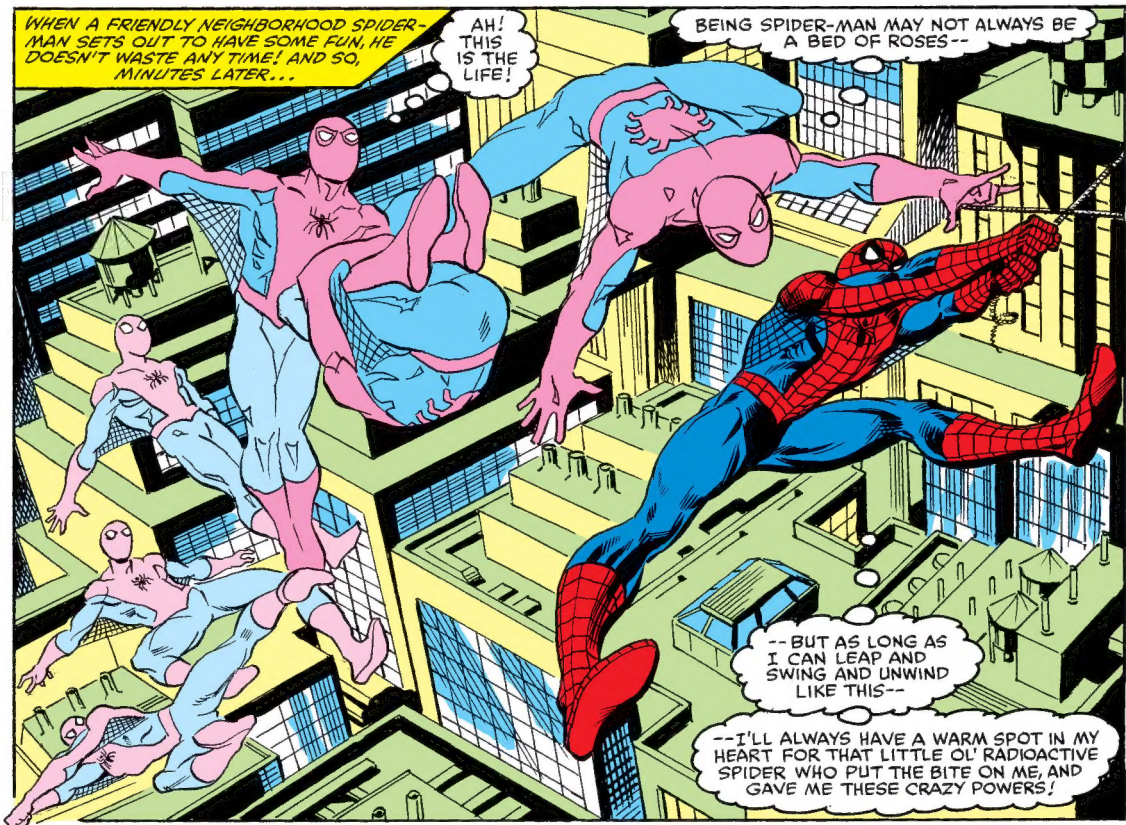
I'VE NEEDED A COUPLE NEW OUTFITS FOR A LONG TIME. THE WAY MY OLD SPIDER-SUIT'S BEEN GETTING SHREPPED LATELY *...



-- I WAS BECOMING THE AMAZING PATCHES-MAN!

*SEE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #66 AND LAST ISSUE.





BUT THE WILY WEB-SLINGER WOULD BE LESS CAREFREE IF HE WERE TO SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING AT A CERTAIN WEST-SIDE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT.

ON THIS SITE, JUST DAYS AGO, SPIDER-MAN BATTLED THE LUMBERING BEHEMOTH KNOWN AS JUGGERNAUT*--

-- WHO WAS EVENTUALLY ENTOMBED IN THOUSANDS OF CUBIC FEET OF CEMENT.

*LAST ISSUE.

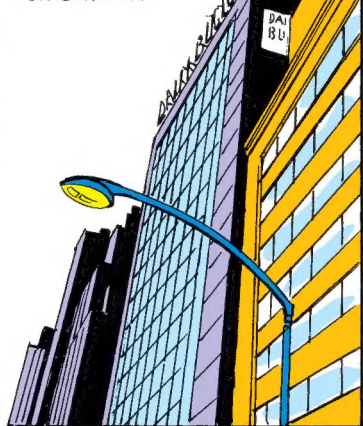
BUT NOW, THE RESTRAINING FENCES ARE AGAIN SPLINTERED BY A MASSIVE FIGURE!

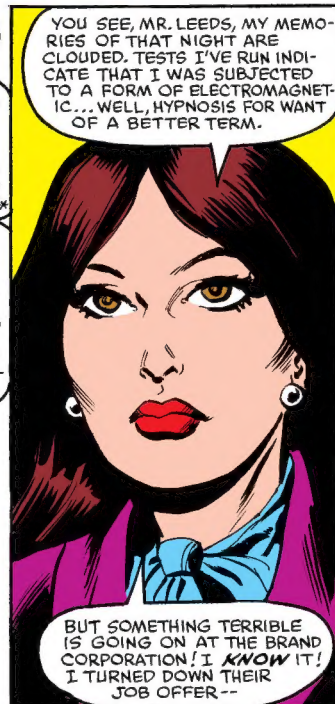
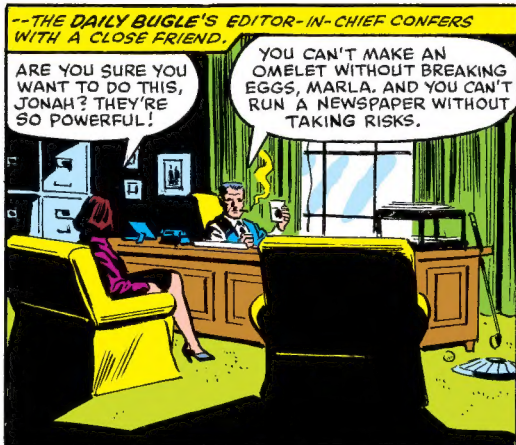


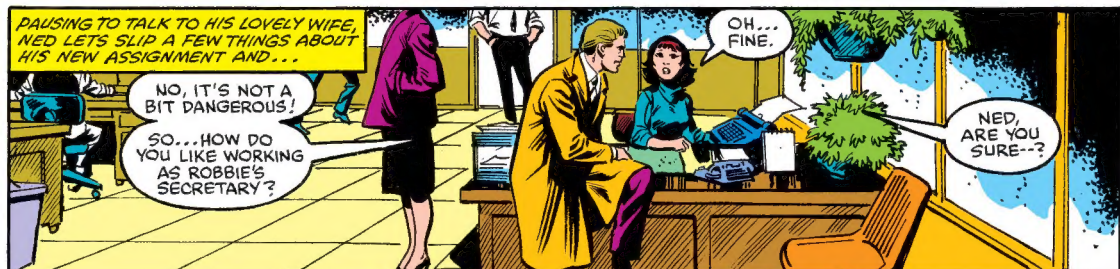
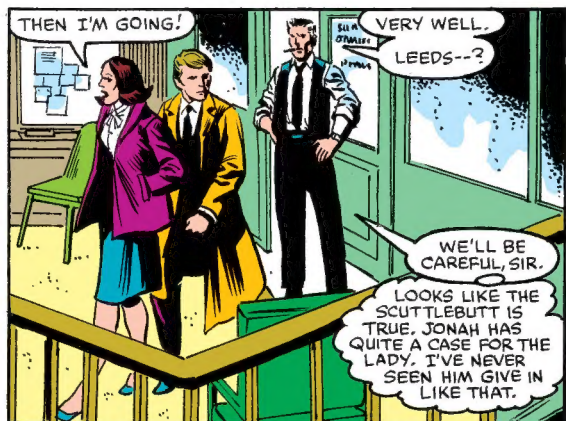
I'M GOING TO HAVE MY REVENGE! I SWEAR IT!



SOMETIME LATER, ON THE SEVENTEENTH FLOOR OF A PROMINENT MANHATTAN SKYSCRAPER--







SEVERAL MINUTES LATER, IN AN OFFICE ON THE CAMPUS OF EMPIRE STATE UNIVERSITY...



GOOD AFTERNOON! DEPARTMENT OF BIO-PHYSICS... MS. WHITMAN SPEAKING.

THIS IS BETTY LEEDS CALLING... UH... FROM THE DAILY BUGLE. I MUST SPEAK WITH PETER PARKER!



WELL, HE DOESN'T WORK HERE AS A TEACHING ASSISTANT ANY MORE, BUT I THINK HE'S IN ONE OF THE LABS.

HOLD ON, I'LL TRANSFER YOU.



IN HER WORK, DEBRA WHITMAN IS A MODEL OF EFFICIENCY.

BUT ONCE THAT WORK IS DONE...

OH, PETER! IF WHAT I SUSPECT ABOUT YOU IS TRUE, A CALL FROM THE *BUGLE* CAN ONLY MEAN TROUBLE!



*FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE RECENT ISSUES OF SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN!

MEANWHILE, IN A NEARBY LABORATORY...

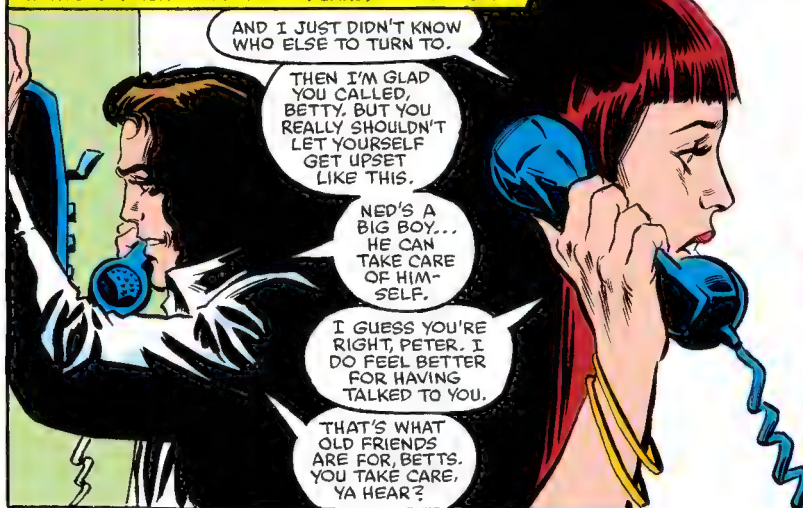


PETE? CALL FOR YOU!

HMM? OH, SURE! BETTER TAKE OVER FOR ME HERE, ROG.

OUR EXPERIMENT'S REACHED A CRITICAL STAGE.

FOR NEARLY TWENTY MINUTES, PETER LISTENS AS BETTY CHOKES OUT HER WORRIES AND FEARS, UNTIL FINALLY...



AND I JUST DIDN'T KNOW WHO ELSE TO TURN TO.

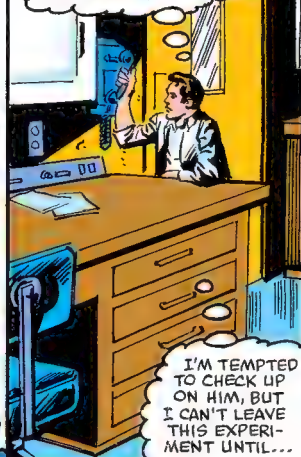
THEN I'M GLAD YOU CALLED, BETTY. BUT YOU REALLY SHOULDN'T LET YOURSELF GET UPSET LIKE THIS.

NED'S A BIG BOY... HE CAN TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF.

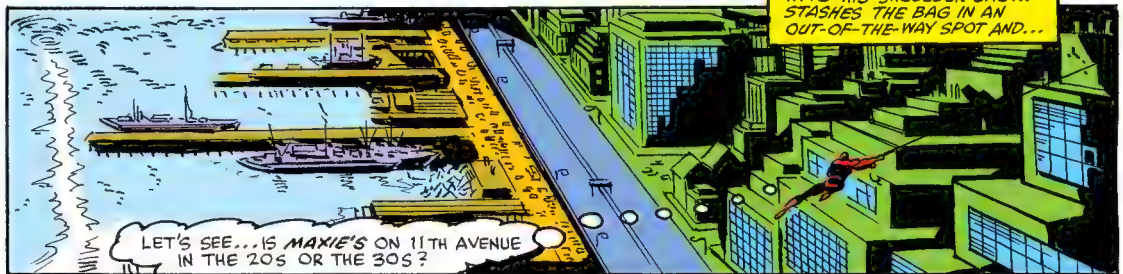
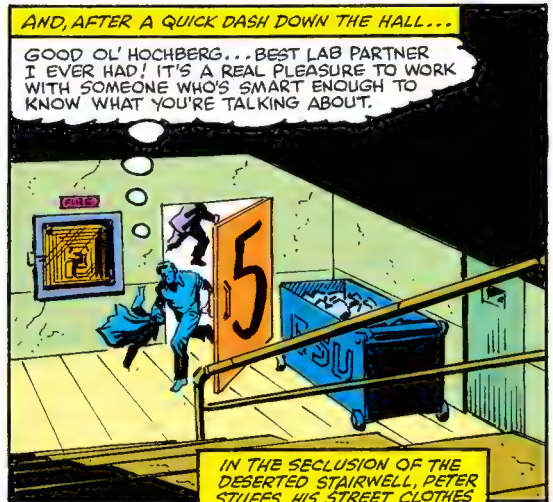
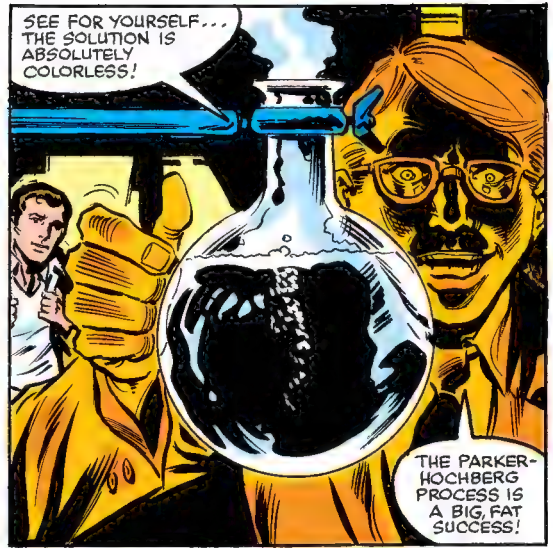
I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT, PETER. I DO FEEL BETTER FOR HAVING TALKED TO YOU.

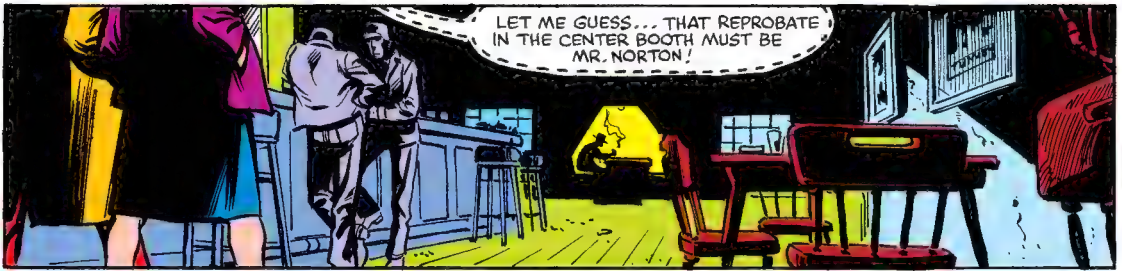
THAT'S WHAT OLD FRIENDS ARE FOR, BETTS. YOU TAKE CARE, YA HEAR?

POOR BETTY... I CAN UNDERSTAND HER FEARS. I HOPE LEEDS KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING. THAT'S A ROUGH NEIGHBORHOOD.



I'M TEMPTED TO CHECK UP ON HIM, BUT I CAN'T LEAVE THIS EXPERIMENT UNTIL...



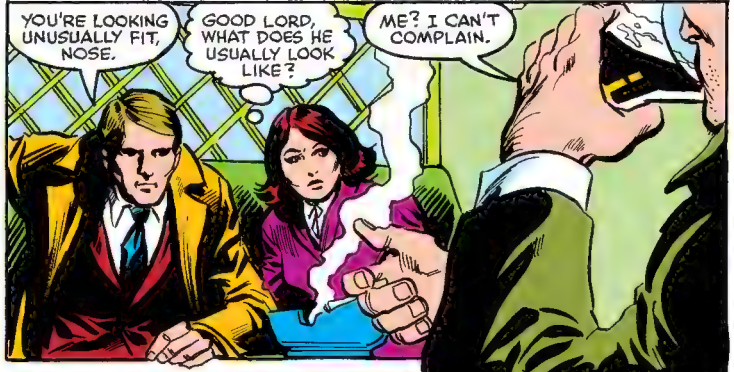


LET ME GUESS... THAT REPROBATE IN THE CENTER BOOTH MUST BE MR. NORTON!



YOU MUST BE PSYCHIC, DOCTOR!
AFTERNOON, NOSE!

HEY, HOWZIT GOIN', LEEDSIE!
WHY DON'T YOU AN' THE LADY SIDDOWN?



YOU'RE LOOKING UNUSUALLY FIT, NOSE.

GOOD LORD, WHAT DOES HE USUALLY LOOK LIKE?

ME? I CAN'T COMPLAIN.



~BAA-RURP~

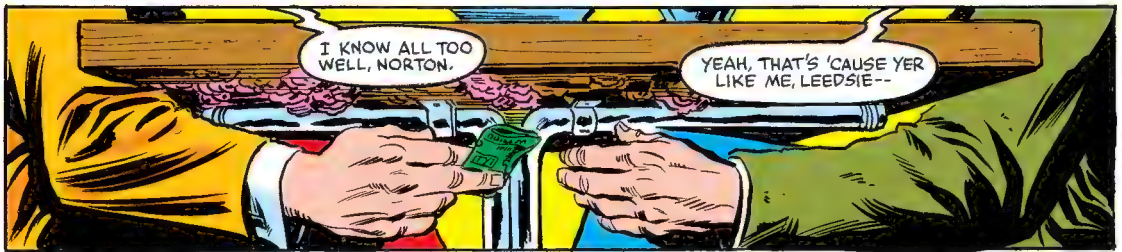
'SCUSE ME.

YOU WANTED TO DO A LITTLE BUSINESS, RIGHT?

~KOFF-KOFF~

MAN, I GOTTA QUIT SMOKIN' SO MUCH. IT'S THESE NEW BRANDS... THEY STINK...

...AN' THEY COST AN' ARM AN' A LEG. KNOW WHAT I MEAN?



I KNOW ALL TOO WELL, NORTON.

YEAH, THAT'S 'CAUSE YER LIKE ME, LEEDSIE--

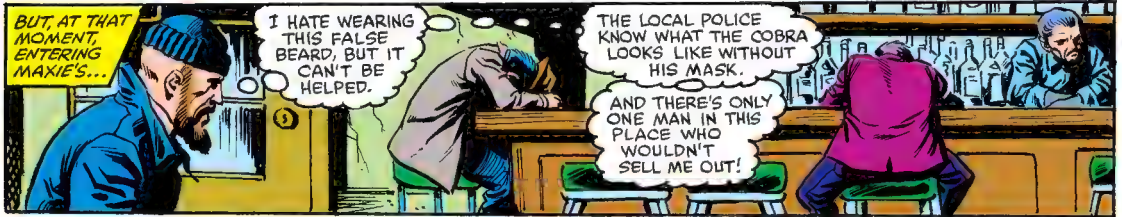


--A REAL MAN O' THE WORLD!

WHADDAYA SAY WE GET US SOME FRESH AIR?

WHATEVER YOU SAY, NOSE. LEAD ON!

DON'T WORRY, DOCTOR. THIS IS THE WAY NORTON AND I USUALLY DO BUSINESS. I JUST STICK CLOSE BESIDE ME.

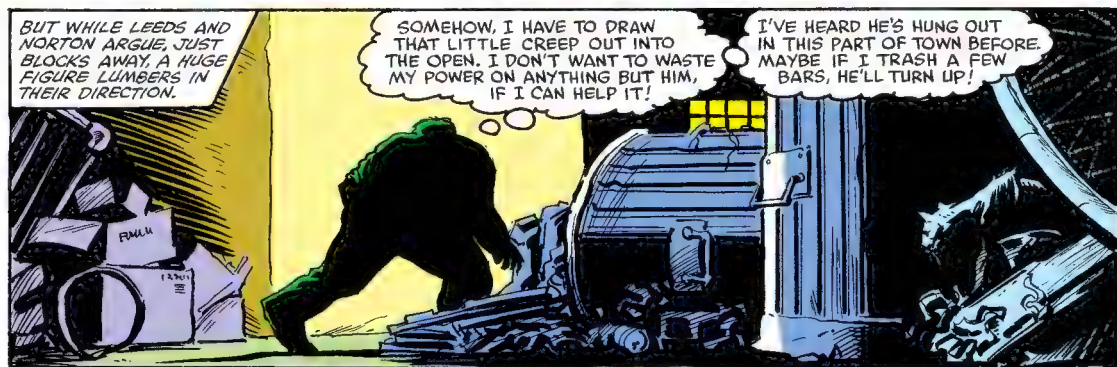
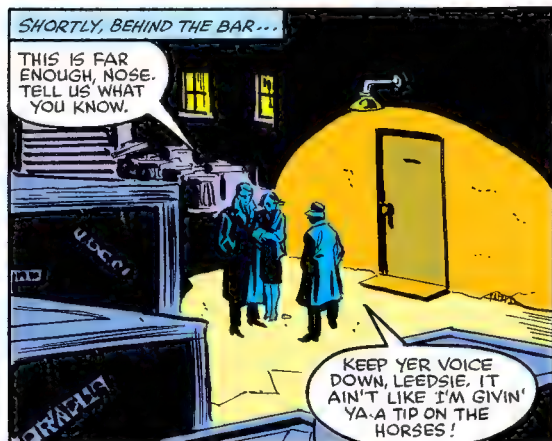
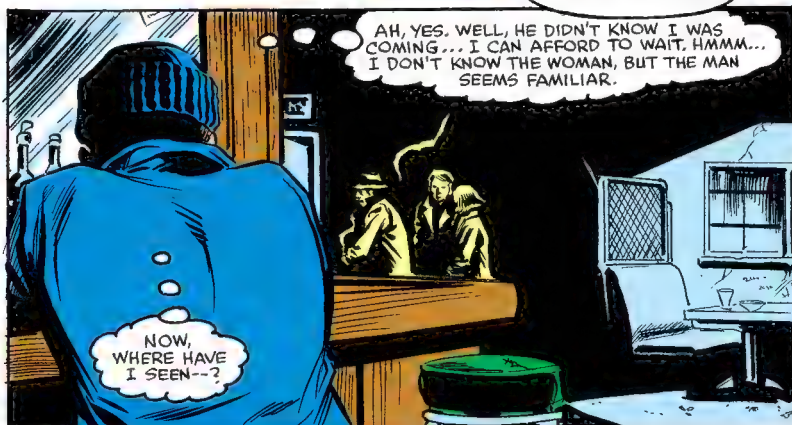


BUT, AT THAT MOMENT, ENTERING MAXIE'S...

I HATE WEARING THIS FALSE BEARD, BUT IT CAN'T BE HELPED.

THE LOCAL POLICE KNOW WHAT THE COBRA LOOKS LIKE WITHOUT HIS MASK.

AND THERE'S ONLY ONE MAN IN THIS PLACE WHO WOULDN'T SELL ME OUT!





AND, HIGH OVERHEAD...

I THOUGHT I KNEW THIS NEIGHBORHOOD LIKE THE BACK OF MY HAND!

MAYBE I SHOULD DROP DOWN CLOSER TO THE STREETS! MAXIE'S HAS TO BE SOMEWHERE NEARBY!

HOLD THE PHONE! MY SPIDER-SENSE IS GIVING ME THE OLD WARNING BUZZ! I DON'T KNOW IF LEEDS IS INVOLVED--



--BUT THERE'S SOME KIND OF BAD CRAZINESS GOING ON...



"...IN THIS VICINITY!"

STOP STALLING, NOSE! HAH, I BET YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING!

LISSSEN, I GOT PLENTY'A DIRT ON BRAND. IT'S JUST THAT YER AWFUL ANXIOUS TO GET IT!

THAT DRIVES THE PRICE UP, YA KNOW?



'SIDES, I DON'T LIKE BEIN' GRABBED!

SO, LAY OFF THE MATERIAL!



YOU CAN'T BACK OUT NOW, NOSE. YOU'RE IN TOO DEEP.

I HAVE YOUR VOICE ON TAPE, CLAIMING TO KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT THE BRAND CORPORATION! YOU WOULDN'T WANT THE WRONG PEOPLE TO HEAR THAT TAPE!

DON' GIVE ME THAT BULL, MAN!

NOSE NORTON, DON' SCARE EASY!



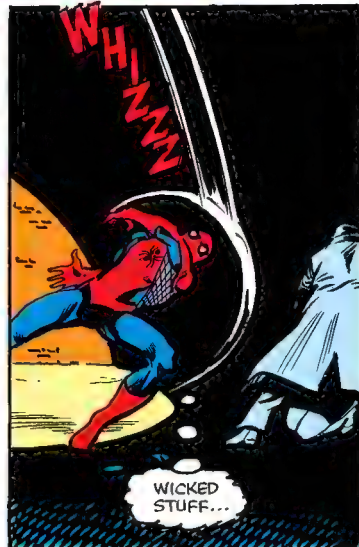
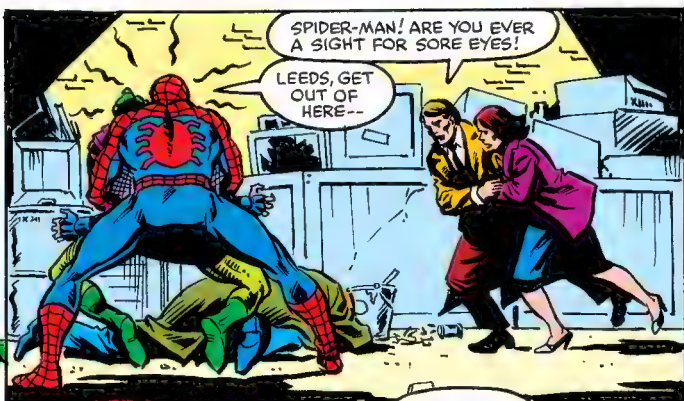
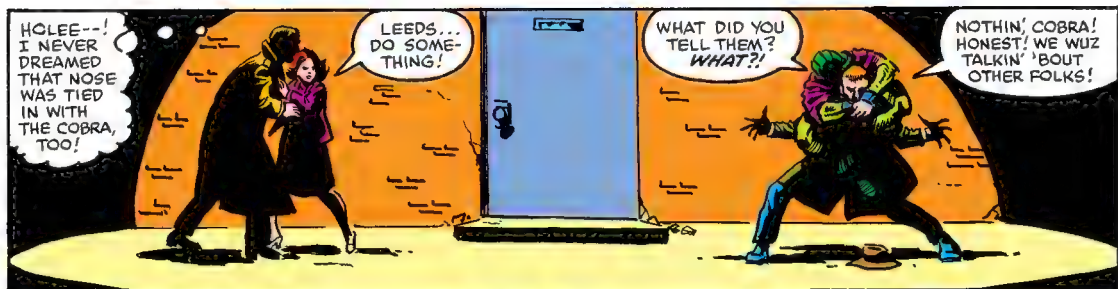
REALLY, NOSE?



C-C-COBRA!

TALKING TO REPORTERS ABOUT US, NOSE? THAT WASN'T WISE!

NO, COBRA! I SWEAR IT AIN'T THE WAY IT LOOKS!

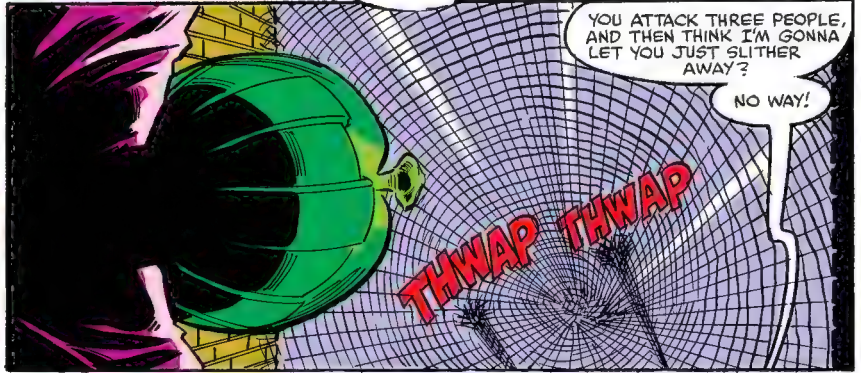




...BUT IT SHOULD DISPERSE QUICKLY UP THERE!



OH, IS THAT SO?



DRAWING SPIDER-MAN'S ATTENTION WITH AN ALMOST MESMERIZING GAZE, THE COBRA FEINTS TO HIS LEFT--

-- AND AS THE WEB-SLINGER WHIRLS TO PROTECT DR. MADISON, THE COSTUMED MASTER CRIMINAL SUDDENLY FIRES HIS VENOM DARTS TO THE RIGHT!

LEEDSIE!

HE... HE TOOK THE HIT MEANT FOR ME!

NED!

OH, NO! THE COBRA SUCKERED ME LIKE I WAS A RANK AMATEUR!

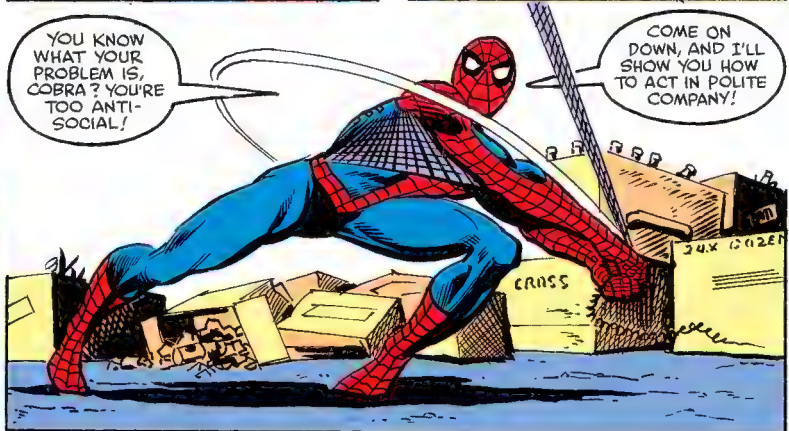
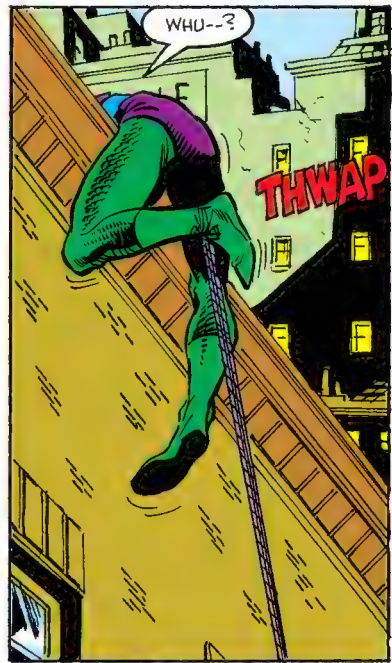
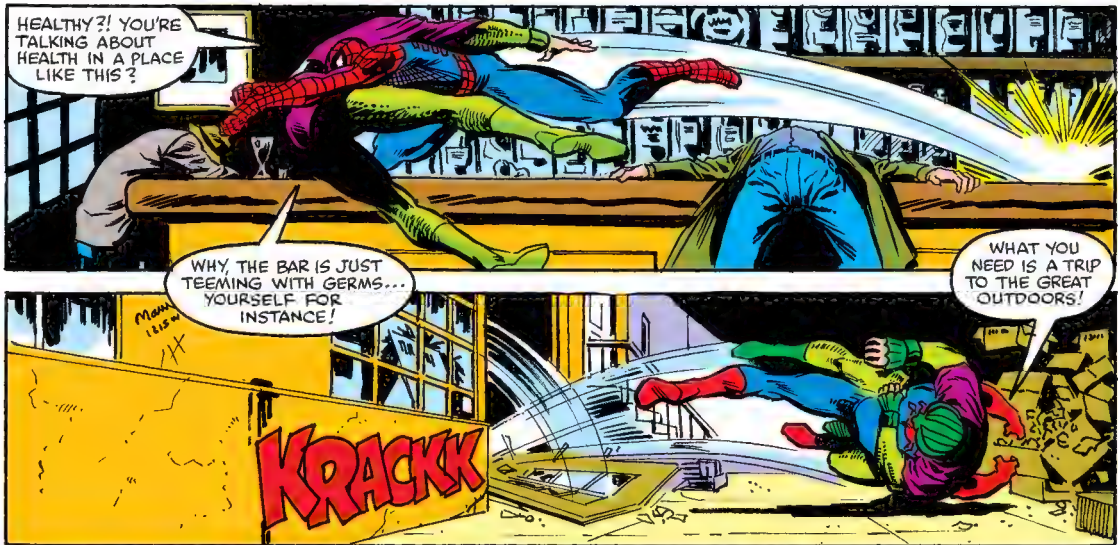
I'VE FAILED BETTY AGAIN! POOR NED'S DEAD BECAUSE I...

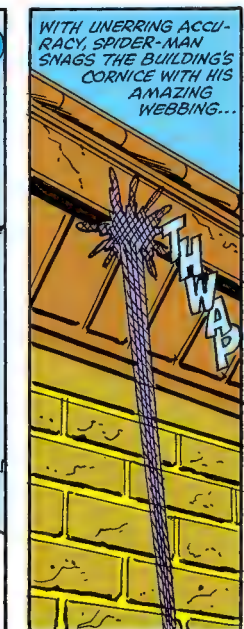
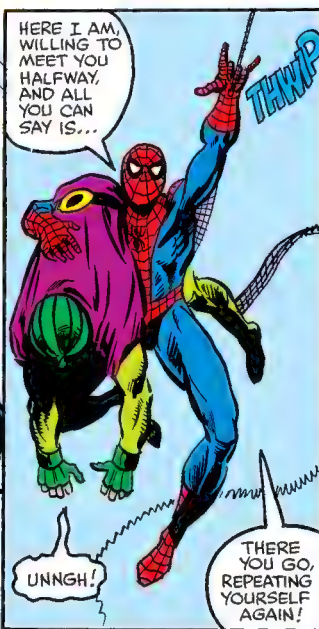
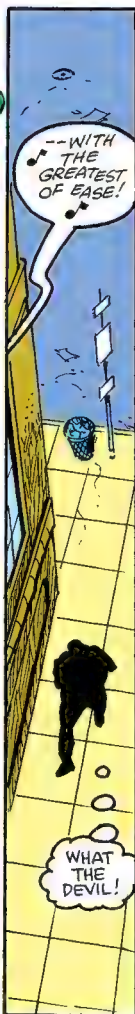
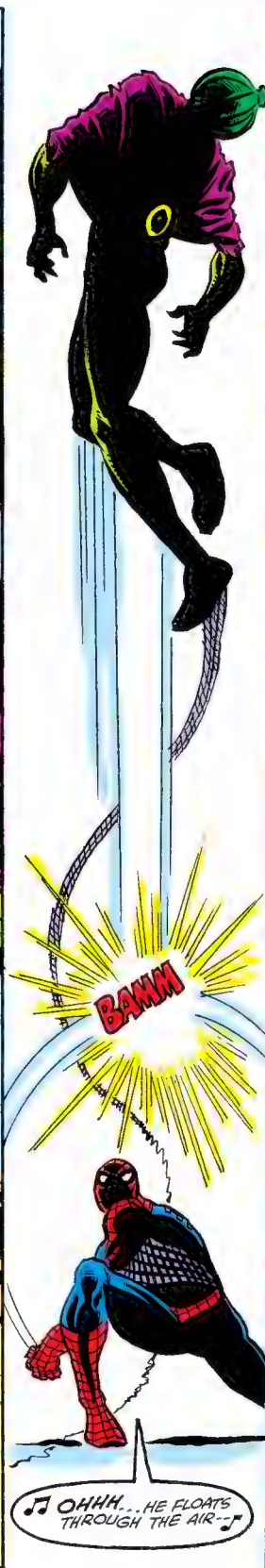
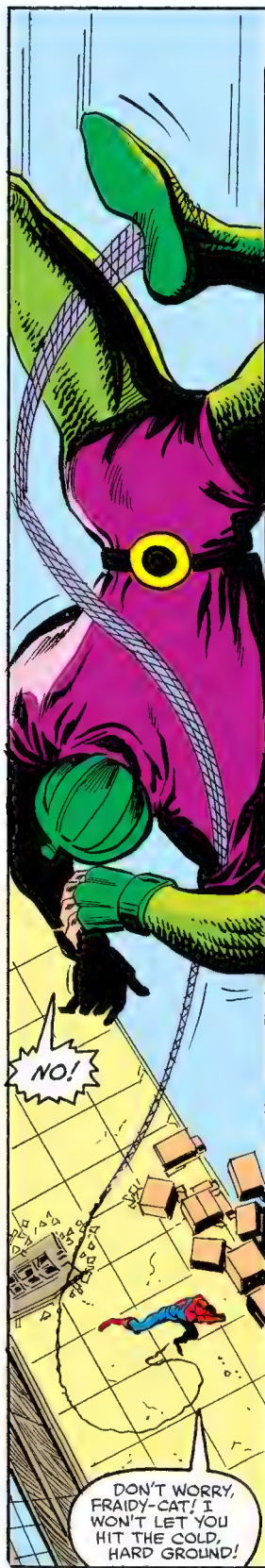
HUH? Y-YOU'RE ALIVE!

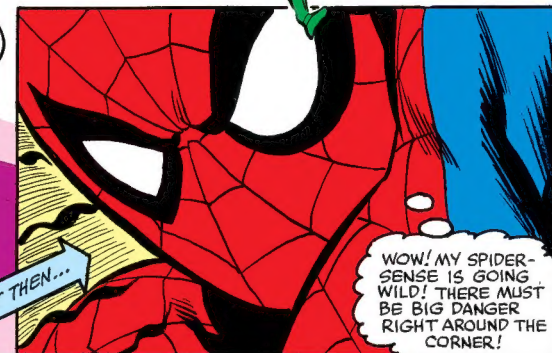
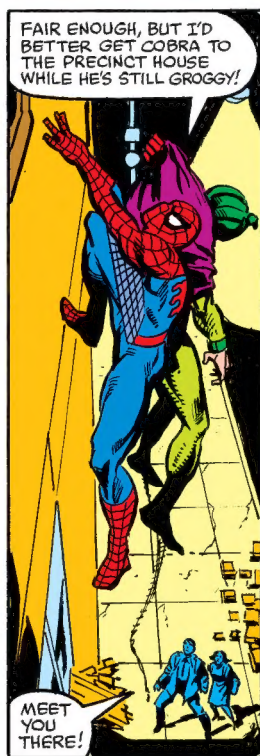
YEAH, BUT MY INTERVIEW RECORDER WILL NEVER BE THE SAME!
HEY... WHERE'S NOSE?

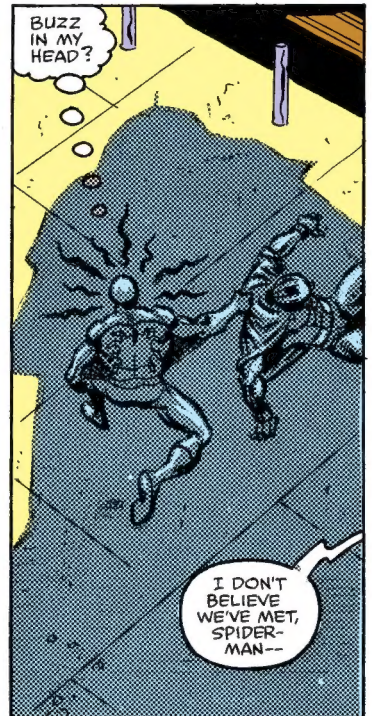
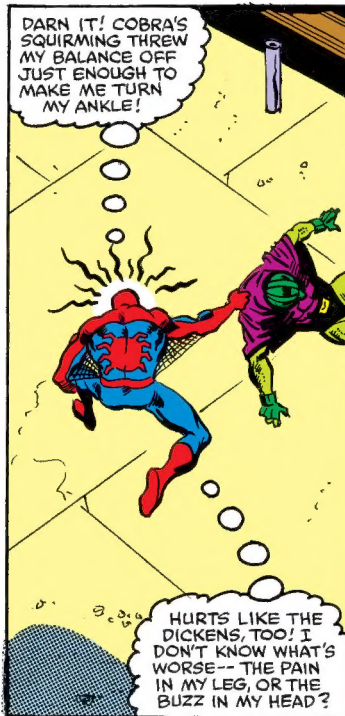
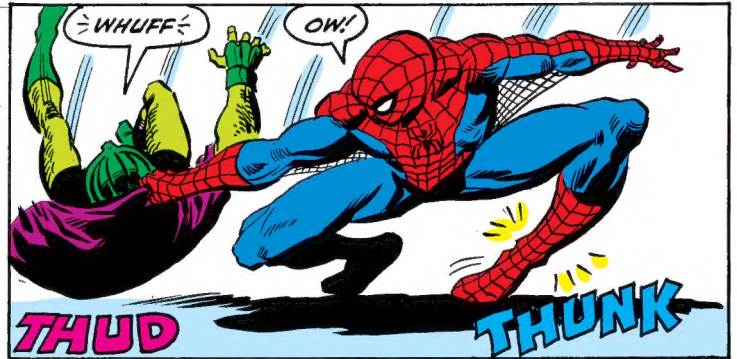
MAXIE!! GET HELP!

THAT WOULDN'T BE HEALTHY, MAXIE!









-- BUT I CALL MYSELF
MISTER HYDE!

YOU HAVE
SOMETHING I
WANT, SPIDER-MAN!
GIVE ME THE COBRA
...AND I MAY
LET YOU LIVE!

OH,
BOY!

DON'T MISS NEXT ISSUE'S THRILLER
HYDE IN PLAIN SIGHT!

THE SPIDER'S WEB

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP
575 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

TOM DeFALCO
EDITOR
LINDA GRANT
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Friends,

If I was nervous about the return of the Black Cat in AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #226, I had cause. After all, in her first appearance, she had grace and style and wit to match Spider-Man himself. And what happened? She's off her rocker, you said.

Then I thought: No, it's a trick. Obviously, Felicia doesn't want to go to jail... so she pretended to be psycho, and Parker fell for it.

Then I thought: they'll never say so. After all, they don't care, do they?

I had so little faith.

Okay, now I'm happy. She's back, her grace and style and wit are undimmed, and Parker's visit to the laundromat looked like the story of my life. Things are looking up. There is hope on the horizon.

I have a few reservations. The panel where B.C. landed on Spider-Man's back disturbed me. The theme that women with powers can't be as competent as men offends me. Are you afraid that she would upstage Spider-Man?

Okay, I'll cool it with the complaints. The Black Cat looks good, and I for one would like to see more of her.

The fourth page was a classic. Good stuff, indeed.

Elizabeth Holden
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Liz, Liz, Liz! If we didn't care, we wouldn't be in this crazy business!

And we're afraid that you misconstrued Spider-Man's little sacrifice play at the party. He let the Black Cat slam into him to discourage her from wanting to become his partner. Like the man said, he works alone. We never meant to imply that B.C. wasn't competent. Obviously, nothing could be further from the truth.

But we are glad you enjoyed the story. You certainly weren't alone!

Dear Weblings,

All right! AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #226 was the best Spider-tale that I have read in a long time! What can I say, except that it was marvelous... from the eerie cover, all the way to page 22.

I'm thrilled to see that John Romita Jr. is really getting into action on the art. Sure, he did an awesome job on IRON MAN, but his SPIDER-MAN is just so great!!

Roger, you turned out a masterful script as usual. I liked the way you tied last issue's Foolkiller storyline in with this one. I must also thank you for bringing back Captain Jean DeWolf, who had not been seen for quite a while. The Black Cat is going straight? Well, I'll be Jameson's uncle! (I just can't see it as a lasting relationship, though.)

Tom, I must salute you for doing something that no other Editor has ever done: namely, linking all of Spider-Man's mags together. At last, we're beginning to find out just when some of his MARVEL TEAM-UP adventures take place. Keep up the good work. And please, involve Peter Parker a little more with the *Daily Bugle*, okay?

What do you have planned for issue #231? After all, that issue will mark twenty

years since Spider-Man first appeared in AMAZING FANTASY #15. Will you give it a king-size format like FANTASTIC FOUR #326?

Thank you for a great 1981. I'm looking forward to 1982 with great expectations. Happy New Year!

Andrew Krepela
6102 138th Street SE
Everett, WA 98204

Actually, Andy, we're holding the larger format in reserve for Spider-Man's twenty-fifth anniversary! We're celebrating the twentieth year by trying to make every issue special in its own right... and by bringing back the classic original SPIDER-MAN stories in MARVEL TALES.

But, since you brought it up, we have an important question to put to everyone reading these words. This issue, bearing an August, 1982 cover-date, marks the twentieth year of Spider-Man. But the twentieth anniversary of this magazine, the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, won't occur until issue #238, cover-dated March, 1983! When the 25-year mark swings around, which anniversary should we celebrate... that of the magazine? Or that of ol' Spidey himself? Or both? We'll leave it up to you!

Dear Tom,

On page three of "But the Cat Came Back..." I thought to myself, "Boy, have these guys ever blown it now!" Here's an indication that the Black Cat was only faking her obsessive infatuation with Spider-Man in order to get lenient treatment. I was greatly disappointed, since she was much more impressive to me as a kooky admirer of Spider-Man, than as just a scheming, two-faced enemy.

Of course, as the story went on, B.C. put some real moves on Spider-Man in order to convince him that she wants to go straight, and all because of her love for him. Whether she is sincere or not is still up in the air.

Well, I think it's great that you've cooked up some suspense from the situation. I only hope that when the smoke clears, it will end up that she really does love Spider-Man... and is still a criminal. To have a criminal who's in love with a super hero would be a fine hook on which to hang some plot threads in the future. And, as Spider-Man is apparently drawn to her as well, we could see some classic, "I love her/him, even though I know it can never work" stories. We are all, oftentimes, the captives of our emotions.

So don't turn the Black Cat into just another villain with an unusual *modus operandi*. Let it be a case of "outlaw love".

T. M. Maple
(No street address given)
Toronto, Ontario

"Outlaw love"? Hey, wouldn't that make a wild comics title?

But seriously, T.M., it looks like you've been reading our minds again, you rascally ol' Spiderphile, you!

Dear Tom,

I loved AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #226.

Or rather, I should say that I loved the Black Cat. I hope you bring her back frequently. Page four, panel five had me rolling in laughter for an hour. In fact, I still chuckle when I look at it.

Isn't it the end of November in New York? Shouldn't there be a little snow on the ground?

Glad you gave us a nice ending to lift our spirits.

David Lipson
5432 South Ingleside
Chicago, IL 60615

Actually, winters in New York tend to be a bit milder than the ones you experience in the Windy City, Dave. (Though we'd probably all like to forget the past winter, right?) But then, we never said that AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #226 took place in November, now did we?

Dear Mr. DeFalco,

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #226 was a very good story indeed. And I think the most intriguing element was Ms. Felicia Hardy. I'm generally not too keen on female characters in comics, but the Black Cat is something else.

"But the Cat Came Back..." was an excellent return. I have to admit that I'd fallen for the mental instability bit. The fact that she pulled that stunt just to avoid prison shows that she is even craftier than Spider-Man.

I hope you bring Felicia back... not in a book of her own, just in an occasional appearance, every five or six issues.

I'd like to see more of Captain Jean DeWolf, too. I see her relation to Spider-Man in much the way Nick Fury relates to Captain America.

On the whole, SPIDER-MAN looks to be in great shape. Keep up the good work!

Dave Levy
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Not to worry, Dave. You haven't seen the last of the Black Cat... not by a long shot!

NEXT ISSUE: Join us as we launch the 21st year of Spider-Man with "Hyde in Plain Sight". 'Nuff said!

